

**Smoke Managers Subcommittee  
Conference Call  
May 12, 2014**

**Roll Call:**

**Mike Broughton, Colorado/US Fish & Wildlife Service (Chair)**  
**Ursula Parker, California/Butte County AQMD (Secretary)**  
**Ann Hobbs, California/Placer County APCD**  
**Brian Bohlmann, WY/Dept of Environmental Quality**  
**Carol Blocksome, Kansas/Kansas State University**  
**Dan Washington, Utah/BLM Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center**  
**Mark Melvin, Georgia/ Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center**  
**Pete Lahm, Washington D.C./USFS**  
**Leif Paulson, WY/Dept of Environmental Quality**  
**Nick Yonker, Oregon/Dept of Forestry**  
**Gary Arcemont, California/San Luis Obispo APCD**  
**Rick Gillam, U.S. EPA, Southeast Region, Atlanta, Georgia**  
**Erin Law, Idaho/USFS Idaho-Montana Airshed Group**  
**Andrea Boyer, Nez Perce Tribe**  
**Paul Charland, Wisconsin/US Fish & Wildlife Service**  
**Rick Boddicker, South Dakota/Department of Environment and Natural Resources**  
**Kim Sumner, California/Siskiyou County APCD**  
**Ed Delgado, Idaho/BLM-National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC)**  
**Melanie Pitrolo, North Carolina/USFS**

*The purpose of the Smoke Manager's Sub-Committee is to increase communications amongst the community of air quality professionals, other state and federal governmental agencies, land managers, and other persons conducting burning activities.*

***Agenda:***

***EPA Update***

***Fire season outlook -***

***[http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/predictive/outlooks/monthly\\_seasonal\\_outlook.pdf](http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/predictive/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf)***

***Air Resource Advisor update***

***Regional updates***

***Special Projects***

***Round Robin***

**EPA Regulatory Update – Rick Gillam**

- NAAQS:
  - Ozone in process of reevaluation.
  - Recently ordered by US District Court to issue proposed revised standards by 12/1/14.
  - Finalize revised standard by 10/21/15.
  - Don't know what standards will be yet, just know that the CA Science Advisory Committee has recommended lowering to 60-70 ppb (current standard is 75).
  - **Pete Lahm** has been instrumental in getting maps up on the "myfirecommunity" website based on 2013 data (which has been QA/QC'ed).

- **Rick** said that the deadline was 5/1/14, but no confirmation yet – will let Pete know via email.
- **Mike Broughton** mentioned that the “myfirecommunity” site has been inactive – the ozone section will be put up in the lessons learned section.
- **PM2.5 Status:**
  - Nothing new, in the process of implementing 12 ug/m3 standard designation change and non-attainment area designations will be updated by 12/2014.
  - There’s a new web-based GIS based tool which has layers showing monitoring values through 2012 (soon will have 2013 verified).
- **Exceptional Events (EE):**
  - There has been some movement, interest at senior levels to act on additional guidance and move ahead with revisions – they are actively working on it.
  - Tom Powers had recently said that it was on hold until a late 2015 release.
  - **Pete Lahm** expressed that he is glad – talking about an ozone implementation schedule that will impact regions and regions should be screaming about it – Rick said that it was a factor in the review.
  - Midwestern and Eastern regions should also have a vested interest in getting the EE Rule revised because the revised ozone standard will make it challenging; much bigger areas of the country could be in non-attainment.
  - EPA Air Quality Standard on wildland fire – EE goes hand in hand, will have to be worked side by side.
- **Climate Change**
  - Everyone may have heard that the current administration released in conjunction with National Wildfire Cohesive Strategy & Climate Change activities, a recognition of Prescribed fire as a tool w/ climate change. We don’t know how that will translate, but could potential turn into something that could enable (more) prescribed fire to be done.

### **Fire season outlook – Ed Delgado**

**Fire season outlook - [http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/predictive/outlooks/monthly\\_seasonal\\_outlook.pdf](http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/predictive/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf)**

- Look at the first page that has 3 maps - the maps try to identify those areas that have fire behavior that is outside the norm.
- The maps consider the drought this year, snowpack and speed of its melting, availability of fuels, future climate change that will shape weather changes and how that will affect the fire situation.
- May outlook: California is in midst of 3 year drought that has been getting worse, snow pack issues <50% of snow, now less than 10% for most of Sierras and most of that below 8,000 feet. Everything below 8,000 feet is cured or is getting ready to cure. 100-110 degree temps already this week.
- Southern/SE Arizona and New Mexico has had very low to no snowpack since February, and what little snow they had has melted and has not been replaced. Recent precipitation

in New Mexico/AZ border has slowed down curing, but high temps will increase fire danger.

- Alaska has been snow-free for two weeks, and with warm temperatures there could be 4-6 weeks of fire danger before they get into their wet period. Late July into August the state gets into wet season and brings fire season to a close (typically mid-July).
- There has been a wet winter in Eastern/OH/TN/MS valley regions, below normal significant fires in that region.
- In West, toward the end of May we get into convective thunderstorm activity, and firestorm activity takes off in June.
- Nevada has been exceptionally dry. This year they have the fuels to go with it, last year they didn't have the fuels, so they have a lot of grasses available to burn in the next few weeks.
- July-August is peak of western fire season, further expansion moving into Eastern Oregon and into SW part of Idaho – will get into dry season and grasses will be available.
- July-August New Mexico/AZ will get into monsoon season.
- Northern Rockies had a very good snow year, some 150%+, snow and rain currently across Colorado, will be keeping a below normal potential for fires from panhandle across to northern WY. CO could have some potential late in the season, but not expecting big fire season like past. Much smaller area of concern but much more severe impacts.
- Oregon's fire season will be earlier than the norm and WA still looks good (precipitation has helped) and will be normal.
- In East, SE, Mississippi Valley not as much fire danger, but Great Lakes could dry out in summer months and could have increased fire danger, especially in MI, OH, IN, IL, WI July and August.
- **Mike Broughton** commented that one thing that stands out to him is the below normal designation for Northern Rockies for July and August. CA, NV, OR could be interesting, SE will be quiet in terms of large scale fires.

#### **Air Resource Advisor update – Pete Lahm**

- This past week in Boise they had an ARA training with approximately 17 students, a couple of teachers, representatives from USFS, BLM, NPS, and State Forestry GA and FL, 25 people in teaching, and a lot of people in Boise attended and helped.
- Training materials are being developed, including webinars, and an ARA guidebook & task book is being put together.
- **Mike Broughton** asked: If there is a large wildfire in a region and there is interest in assistance (officials want to bring in an Air Resource Advisor (ARA)), who do people call?

- First, you need to determine whose jurisdiction is it in; the agency administrator, Inciweb will help. USFS has an air program, for example, in California, contact Trent Procter.
- Some state lands, USFS, etc. have collaborative/cooperator meetings; NPS & FWS have air programs. Often wildfires are in areas where there are no air monitors, so having an incident response by ARA can help get a monitor there.
- Preseason stakeholder meetings are held in some regions that are at risk. If you aren't in that group, reach out. On a local level there can be that effort. Best way to keep track of that is to contact USFS in your region, but it is highly variable region to region. Protocols are being developed and this really helps the ARA, gives them a starting point.

### **Special Projects – Ursula Parker**

Ursula is working on a master's degree at California State University, Chico, and through her interest in prescribed burning has decided to write her thesis on her research in increasing public support of prescribed burning through cooperation between land managers and air quality regulatory agencies. Several recently published professional papers have indicated that air quality regulations are frequently viewed as an impediment to prescribed burning, and Ursula would like to perform surveys and interview representatives from both the regulatory community and the land management community in order to gain a greater depth of knowledge about the issues so that we can work together to reduce wildfire risk through prescribed burning. Ursula anticipates that she will begin interviews and surveys this summer and is very excited about what the research might lead to. Anyone with interest is encouraged to contact Ursula, [uparker@bcaqmd.org](mailto:uparker@bcaqmd.org) or (530) 332-9400 x 104.

### **Regional Group Discussions – Mike Broughton**

- We would like to extend as a regular feature that each call have a “hot topics” discussion in each of the regional areas. Mike is looking for a volunteer from each region to report:
  - **Midwest:** **Carol Blocksme** said there has been a dry spring with smoke creating PM exceedances in Omaha and Lincoln and ozone exceedances in Wichita. They will be meeting in the first part of June to establish a strategy. There is a smoke management program in KS. Unusual weather in KS and little burning the last few years because of drought. Late rains last year = greater fuel. Carol has also been in touch with Environmental Planning and is looking for \$ so that they can start writing grants.
  - **West:** **Ann Hobbs**, IASC, in collaboration with the California Air Resource Board and CARPA, held a workshop last week to go over coordinated response from wildfires last year to get feedback for the coming year. Presentations are now online on the CARPA website (<http://www.arb.ca.gov/carpa/carpa.htm>).

### **Round Robin/Next Meeting Discussion: Mike Broughton**

The next meeting will be scheduled for late July. Mike will bring a report back from the Large Wildland Fire Conference in Missoula, Montana (being held later this month).

- Air Resource Advisory training – if interested, please contact **Pete Lahm**. **Erin Law**, **Andrea Holland**, **Mark Fitch**, **Mike Broughton**, and **Claudia Standish** have all been Air Resource Advisors.